

Many Don't have Time for Vacation

Study Finds One-third of Workers Face Major Stress on the Job

Although this is the 21st century and most employers are trying to provide worker-friendly conditions, too many workers continue to be overworked, a new national survey reveals.

A random telephone survey of 632 workers taken by Central Marketing for Oxford Health Plans (New York) late last summer found:

➔ One-third (34 percent) of respondents have such busy jobs that they report having no down time at work.

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➔ One third (32 percent) eat lunch while they are working.

➔ One-third (32 percent) never leave their building once they arrive at work.

➔ One-fifth (19 percents) said workplace pressures make them feel they must attend work even when injured or sick.

➔ One-fifth (19 percent) feel their jobs make them feel older than they are.

➔ One-sixth (18 percent) say they are unable to use their annual vacation time due to job demands, although U.S. workers have less vacation time than almost every other industrialized nation.

➔ One-sixth (17 percent) say work causes them to lose sleep at home.

➔ One-sixth (17 percent) find it is difficult to take off or leave work in an emergency.

➔ One-seventh (14 percent) say their employer makes it difficult to maintain a healthy diet.

➔ One-seventh (14 percent) feel company management only promotes people who habitually work late.

Vacations Needed to Prevent Illness

Pointing to the reluctance of a significant number of workers to take time off work to go on a vacation, Oxford Health's chief medical officer Dr. Alan Muney called the survey "a wakeup call for Americans to realize that taking a vacation is not frivolous behavior. It's essential to staying healthy. Regular vacations ... cut down on stress-related illness and save health care dollars," he said.

He cited a study published last year of nearly 13,000 men aged 35 to 57 and found regular vacations lowered the risk of death by almost 20 percent. On the plus side, the survey found:

- ❑ 70 percent of respondents said their employer makes it easy for them to keep medical appointments.**
- ❑ 68 percent said their employer makes it easy to return to work after an illness. Note: 8 percent of respondents believed that if they were to become seriously ill, they would be fired or demoted.**

The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent.

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